

## **STATE FINALIZES PERMIT FOR GREAT FALLS TO LETHBRIDGE POWERLINE**

Gov. Brian Schweitzer's office announced this morning that the Montana Alberta Tie Line has been granted a permit from the Department of Environmental Quality, completing the state permitting process for the project.

The 230 kilovolt, 214 mile-long line that will connect Lethbridge with Great Falls still needs final approval from the U.S. Department of Energy

"This is a great day for Montana. We are going to add more clean-and-green energy to the 271 megawatts of wind energy we already produce," Schweitzer said in a statement. "With the completion of this project, we will see 600 more mega watts of Montana wind fill these lines creating hundreds of jobs for Montanans and triggering a billion dollars worth of wind development in North Central Montana."

Planned development of the MATL line has brought several interested wind developers to the area, many of which cited the lack of transmission as a hurdle to previously developing wind farms here.

"The MATL line is an important first step in clearing the way of any obstacles that would hinder our ability to make clean, Montana energy," said the Governor. "I am encouraged by the hard work of DEQ and (the federal Department of Energy) to make sure that this project was given the careful consideration it deserves."

Earlier this month, the Montana DEQ and U.S. Department of Energy released their final Environmental Impact Statements. After reviewing comments submitted by the public, DEQ has offered its Record of Decision that MATL is ready to move forward.

"Our staff worked very hard to balance the legitimate concerns of local land owners with our need for the transmission of this vast source of renewable energy," said DEQ director Richard Oppen. "Montanans for generations to come will benefit from this farsighted investment in infrastructure."